Year in Review - 2014

In 2014, NHMC helped achieve a more responsible and inclusive media ecosystem and advance more affordable and open communications services for all.

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Message from NHMC’s President & CEO

Things are coming together for the Latino community. With historic inroads to Latino inclusion in media, including Latina leads in two primetime television shows, we’re seeing incremental progress.

Make no mistake: Latinos still face discrimination and exclusion in all areas of economic activity, including and particularly in mainstream media, which includes radio, television, film, print and digital. There is no denying its historical role in fueling anti-Latino opinions and attitudes that have led to Latino employment discrimination and prejudices throughout this nation. Until we have fair representation that shows a three-dimensional view of Latinos and who we are, we will continue missing out on true representation.

NHMC is working through all avenues to ensure that Latinos can connect and tell their stories, be it through our Television Writers Program, Latino Scene Showcase, Latino Premiere Club, or our policy advocacy to expand affordable access to open communications systems and Latino ownership of media outlets.

2015 will be the year to push media corporations to include Latinos at all levels of employment. The Latino talent and expertise is there, and what has to happen is for television networks, film studios, production companies and talent agencies to make Latino inclusion an immediate business imperative.

By supporting NHMC, you're standing with an organization at the forefront of American Latino media advocacy. NHMC is at the table with key decision makers in Hollywood and Washington, D.C. to ensure that Latinos across the nation are treated fairly.

Alex Nogales
President & CEO
National Hispanic Media Coalition
Responsible and Inclusive Media

Training and Infusing Latinos into the Media Pipeline

NHMC Television Writers Program. Our annual five-week intensive television scriptwriters workshop received a record-breaking 350 applications this year, thanks to a promotional video starring two alumni that generated greater awareness for the program. Now in its 12th year, the program is more successful than ever with alumni not only being accepted into network writing programs such as NBC’s Writers on the Verge, but also accepting staff and writing assistant positions on various television shows. In 2014, alumni contributed to the following shows: NCIS (CBS); Ravenswood (ABC Family); Surviving Jack (Fox); Grimm (NBC); Hit the Floor (VH1); The Fosters (ABC); The Crazy Ones (NBC); Gang Related (Fox); Rizzoli and Isles (TNT); Pretty Little Liars (ABC Family); Cristela (ABC), State of Affairs (NBC), Jane the Virgin (CW), Red Band Society (FOX), Selfie (ABC), Beauty and the Beast (CW), Stalker (CBS) and East Los High (Hulu). Since its 2003 launch, more than 100 writers, 25% of whom have been staffed on shows, have graduated from the program.

Latino Scene Showcase. In September, NHMC and the Los Angeles Theatre Center presented the 2nd Annual Latino Scene Showcase. The showcase featured seven scenes written by NHMC TV Writers Program alumni and performed by Latino actors before an audience of 150 television network executives, agents and managers. The annual event aims to infuse more Latino talent into the Hollywood pipeline.
**NHMC MediaCon.** In March, more than 250 media, entertainment and tech industry executives and insiders, as well as Latinos at both the professional level within the industry and those looking to enter the industry, convened at the **2014 NHMC MediaCon** in Los Angeles. Nina Tassler, CBS Entertainment Chairman; Jennifer Salke, NBC Entertainment President; Paul Lee, ABC Entertainment Group President; and Joe Earley, Fox Broadcasting Chief Operating Officer joined NHMC’s president and CEO Alex Nogales during the keynote panel to discuss the future of broadcast television. In groundbreaking remarks, all four executives underscored the importance of having diversity at all levels of employment within their networks. This historic moment received high-profile coverage in several industry outlets, including The Wrap and Variety.

**Policy Fellowship Program.** Each semester NHMC selects at least one law student to participate in this paid internship program. Past fellows hail from distinguished schools such as Harvard, Stanford, UCLA, Berkeley and Georgetown. Fellows are guided through legal and policy research, analysis, writing and public speaking. They build skills while enhancing NHMC’s advocacy before the FCC and other agencies. NHMC staff dedicates time to connecting its policy fellows with employers. Former NHMC fellows have gone on to judicial clerkships, the FCC, media companies, non-profit organizations, and law firms large and small. This year NHMC is pleased that former fellow Brenda Villanueva joined the FCC through its Attorney Honors Program, and that former fellow Fabiola Rivas joined Azteca America as a Junior Attorney.

**Pushing for Responsible Latino Media Portrayals**

**Standing Up to Hate Speech in Media.** NHMC continued educating media corporations and the public about the harms of hate speech in media. Since 2009, NHMC has been calling on the federal government to examine the extent and effects of hate speech in media, and to counteract its negative impacts through any means available while respecting First Amendment freedoms. In 2014, Congressman Hakeem Jeffries and Senator Edward Markey introduced companion bills, both titled the Hate Crimes Reporting Act of 2014, directing the National Telecommunications and Information Administration to conduct such a study on hate speech in media. The bills did not pass this year, but they brought NHMC from the sidelines to the mainstream of this debate. NHMC will pursue this again in the new Congress.
Eliminating Hate from the Immigration Debate. As the conversation around immigration reform, executive action, and the humanitarian crisis at the border unfolded, NHMC spoke to national and local news networks to ensure balanced coverage of Latinos and immigrants. In a column on Univision.com, NHMC’s president and CEO Alex Nogales discussed how the underrepresentation and misrepresentation of Latinos in media has fueled prejudice and misconceptions about Latinos and immigrants, saying this is "one of the biggest barriers to achieving equality in this country."

Holding MSNBC Accountable for Stereotypical Segment. After MSNBC aired a stereotypical segment with a white anchor portraying a drunken Mexican in a sombrero on Cinco de Mayo, NHMC joined the National Association of Hispanic Journalists in denouncing the piece, and after both organizations reached out, MSNBC apologized. A few weeks later, MSNBC announced it hired anchor Jose Diaz-Balart to host a show on the network. Diaz-Balart has changed the face of MSNBC, bringing more Latino guests onto the network and covering issues of import to the community.

Advocating for Latino Inclusion in Media

Federal Policy Advocacy for Latino Inclusion. This year, NHMC continued to rally against media consolidation, which leads to fewer opportunities for Latinos to own broadcast television and radio stations. In August, NHMC filed comments, highlighting the deplorable state of Latino media ownership and urging the FCC to conduct research and adopt policies that promote diversity. NHMC’s executive vice president and general counsel, Jessica J. González, testified on this issue before the U.S. House of Representatives Energy & Commerce Committee, Subcommittee on Communications & Technology. In addition to its work on media ownership, NHMC continues to urge the FCC to infuse more Latinos into the agency – where they are currently vastly underrepresented.
Latino Media Experts Project. Media bias is more than negative stereotypes portrayed in the media. It also encompasses the lack of Latino presence in mainstream media. To fill this void, NHMC assembled more than 100 Latino policy experts in the twelve largest U.S. cities to train them to speak on television, and to connect them with local broadcast stations. NHMC leveraged its longstanding relationships with the presidents of the major English-language TV networks to open the door for these experts to appear on the local stations and to offer insight on their areas of expertise. Through this project, NHMC has already infused more positive portrayals of Latinos into local news coverage and increased viewpoint diversity. The initiative received coverage from NBCNews.com.

Latino Inclusion at the Oscars. Press reports following the Oscar’s ceremony painted 2014 as a banner year for diversity. In a Huffington Post piece, “Newsflash: It Was Not a Big Year for Latinos at Sunday Night’s Oscars,” NHMC President & CEO Alex Nogales set the record straight. While acknowledging there were historic wins for Latinos, he wrote, “the entertainment industry as a whole needs to understand that diversity is an American reality that cannot be ignored. I recognize the steps made towards inclusion of American Latinos. But it is even more critical to recognize the long road still ahead. Or else we risk undermining progress thinking that we have reached real equality.”

Latino Premiere Club. This year NHMC and Latin Heat Media Institute launched the Latino Premiere Club (LPC), whose goal is to give Latinos a voice on upcoming film and television projects that tell Latino stories and/or employ Latinos in front of and behind the camera. LPC is a collaborative forum where influential American Latinos converse with entertainment industry leaders, resulting in Latino inclusion at all levels of production and creating authentic American Latino stories and other stories that appeal to Latinos. This year, LPC was proud to get behind Jane the Virgin, a telenovela-style CW comedy-drama starring Gina Rodriguez who dreams of becoming a writer, and Cristela, a family sitcom on ABC starring Cristela Alonzo as an aspiring attorney. Both Rodriguez and Jane the Virgin were recently nominated for Golden Globes.
Honoring Latino Talent and Advocates

**NHMC Impact Awards Gala.** The 17th Annual NHMC Impact Awards honored Academy Award-nominated actor Demian Bichir (*The Bridge*), actor/director Diego Luna (*Chavez*), actress Emily Rios (*The Bridge*) and executive producer George Parra (*American Hustle, Nebraska*). The legendary Edward James Olmos received the Lupe Ontiveros Indomitable Spirit Award in memory of NHMC’s good friend. Gina Rodriguez (*Jane the Virgin*) and Dayanara Torres (former Miss Universe) emceed the event. Rosario Dawson, Matthew Lillard and Diane Kruger were on hand to present awards to their friends, Diego Luna, Emily Rios and Demian Bichir, respectively. Many other celebrities and Hollywood influencers filled the audience. The annual event recognizes the outstanding achievements and contributions to the positive portrayals of Latinos in media.

**NHMC Local Impact Awards Luncheon.** In September, NHMC celebrated its 12th Annual NHMC Local Impact Awards Luncheon, recognizing local talent and community leaders in Los Angeles — the second largest designated market area (DMA), and largest DMA by Latino population, in the country — for their achievements and contributions to the region’s Latino community. This year's honorees included ABC7’s Alysha del Valle, Los Angeles Lakers’ Spanish-language announcer Jose “Pepe” Mantilla, 94.7 KTWV’s Talaya Trigueros, NBC4’s Mekhalo Medina, Univision 34’s Norma Roque, and KPCC’s A. Martínez and Alex Cohen.

**NHMC Washington, DC Impact Awards Reception.** In December NHMC celebrated its 5th Annual NHMC Washington, D.C. Impact Awards Reception at the National Association of Broadcasters' headquarters. At the reception, NHMC honored Senator Edward Markey, Congressman Raúl Grijalva and Congressman Hakeem Jeffries for their Outstanding Public Service. The event honors public servants and community leaders, as well as media professionals and entities, whose achievements, generosity of spirit, and courage under fire have greatly benefited the welfare of the nation in the areas of media and telecommunications.
Affordable and Open Communications for All
A Voice for Latinos in Washington, D.C.

Promoting Policies for Low-Cost Telephone and Broadband Services. NHMC filed countless pleadings with the FCC advocating for the modernization of Lifeline, which currently subsidizes phone service for low-income families, and the expansion of “E-rate,” which subsidizes broadband Internet service at schools and libraries in impoverished neighborhoods. In November, NHMC’s Jessica J. González participated in a panel discussion called “Reforming Lifeline for the Broadband Era,” during which FCC Commissioner Mignon Clyburn outlined her comprehensive vision for the future of the program. Later in the month, a majority of FCC Commissioners supported the modernization of Lifeline. In addition, the FCC expanded E-rate to make it easier for schools to connect to broadband and enhance Wi-Fi access, and to significantly raise the funding cap of the program for the first time since 1997. In a piece for the New York Times, González advocated for closing the digital divide and making broadband access universal by reclassifying Internet service providers under Title II of the Communications Act.

Preserving Equality on the Internet. Throughout the year, NHMC urged the FCC to adopt strong and sustainable Open Internet, or “Net Neutrality,” rules that prevent blocking and harmful discrimination online and that preserve the many opportunities that the Internet has afforded Latinos and others. NHMC educated key decision makers at the FCC and on Capitol Hill about the importance of an Open Internet to communities of color. NHMC advocated for rules grounded in the bounded authority that the FCC has over Internet service providers designated as common carriers. NHMC filed comments and reply comments at the FCC on behalf of the Voices for Internet Freedom coalition and dozens of organizations. Further, NHMC produced educational two-pagers, released videos and published blog posts, participated in creating other informative materials, organized meetings between Latino content producers and entrepreneurs and decision makers, hosted discussion forums, and even visited the White House to advocate. The New York Times even ran an op-doc on Net Neutrality featuring NHMC’s Jessica J. González. As a result, the debate shifted dramatically. Four million people, hundreds of Internet companies, dozens of Latino organizations and leaders, and dozens of Members of Congress have joined our side. These efforts culminated in President Obama publicly aligning himself with NHMC and others in urging the FCC to adopt strong Open Internet rules using sound and sustainable legal authority. Recent reports indicate the FCC is poised to act, largely in accordance with NHMC’s position, early next year, leaving NHMC optimistic about the year ahead.